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Foreword

When the waters receded after the tsunami triggered by the Great East Japan Earthquake, they took with them not only the lives of thousands but – in the wake of the subsequent meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant – the sense of security of millions. Japan is still struggling to square its social, financial and climate-change obligations as it tries to rebuild, reboot the economy and – above all – reassess its energy strategy. *Setsuden* (saving electricity) continues to define the national mood, with the government pressing citizens to take the stairs and set their air conditioners to 28°C in the summer and heating thermostats to 21°C in the winter. More than a year and a half after the triple disaster of 2011, the lights stay low in Japan.

Here at the Tachibana Kaikan – the graceful 100-year-old former home of Kyoto University’s presidents, which now houses Sansai Gakurin, a research and educational institution affiliated to the Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies (GSGES) – efforts to cut costs and energy use across the campus have effected some not-so-subtle changes. One hot summer’s day in July last year, the pond was emptied of water. The motor that fed the pond with water was powered by electricity and, in those first days of *setsuden*, it was deemed a luxury the university could no longer afford. The effects were almost instantaneous. Once the pond-life disappeared, the birds stopped visiting and the garden fell silent. Water-loving irises died back and mosquitoes bred in the stagnant water that collected in the hollows of the drained pond bed.

The winter arrived without the garden receiving its annual haircut. No trimming of the pine trees, no cutting of the grass, felling of rotten wood or pruning new growth. When renowned eco philosopher Satish Kumar visited the Gakurin in February this year, I blushed with embarrassment when I showed him the unkempt wilderness that nudged ever closer to the house. He smiled and praised the beauty of a garden returning to its natural state.

This changed my perception of the garden. Working late one summer night, I heard a loud rustling next to the *engawa* (wooden veranda). Peering into the dark, I spied a *tanuki* (badger raccoon) lapping water from the hollow of a large stone less than a metre from where I stood. The animal and I enjoyed the relative cool of the evening air for 10 minutes before he moved on. Other visitors to the garden include feral cats and even an elusive pheasant. The garden has embraced its new incarnation, the 300-year-old trees blazing with autumn colour, unperturbed by the changes that have taken place beneath their branches.

This vivid reminder of nature’s resilience offers hope at a time when people across Japan are struggling to rebuild, heal and adapt. Such hope is expressed exquisitely by Satish Kumar, whose message of sustainability for all plants, creatures and humans opens this issue of *Sansai*. There is also a sense of hope in the contributions of Atsushi Nakao, Shinya Funakawa, Hirofumi Tsukada, Takashi Kosaki, Junji Miyakoshi and Satoshi Konishi, scientists who address the threat to our ecosystems posed by nuclear and electromagnetic pollution and who also consider the potential extinction of our species. Hope can also be found in both old and



Furuike ya
kawazu tobikomu
mizu no oto

Matsuo Bashō (1686)

The old pond
A frog jumps in
Sound of water



Photographs: Kenji Yamamoto

An old pond, newly drained
A frog jumps in
Ouch!

Anon (2011)

new solutions to our societal and environmental problems – whether in the religious world view put forward by Yoichi Kaji or in the sustainability metrics presented by Ben McClellan, Andrew Dicks and João Carlos Diniz da Costa. Finally, hope is expressed by the younger generation. Three young authors, Akiko Iizuka, Tran Thanh Duc and Nguyen Ngoc Tung, who all recently acquired PhDs from GSGES for research carried out in collaboration with professors from Kyoto University and Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry, Vietnam, show their passionate commitment to the vulnerable by working to combat natural disasters and cultural loss in Vietnam. The combined contribution of these diverse authors brings us the hope of an active, united and communicative academic community that is eager to reach across academic disciplines and national boundaries to engage with scholars and readers the world over.

Personally, I've been inspired by the arrival two new editors. Jane Singer and Andrew Hillier have joined *Sansai*'s editorial staff and are welcome allies at a time when *Sansai* Gakurin and *Sansai* are still missing the influence of their illustrious founder, Toshio Yokoyama, who is spending his retirement – in typical Japanese fashion – as the vice-president

and director of the library at Shiga University. Together, *Sansai*'s editors and authors welcome you to this platform for change. We invite you to consider our ideas and to share your visions with us to ensure this particular academic garden continues to evolve and thrive.

13 November 2012

Tracey Gannon (PhD)
Editor-in-chief, *Sansai*
Sansai Gakurin
Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies
Kyoto University

Voices

Research papers

Current projects and initiatives

**Asia
Platform
focus**

Perspectives

Instructions for authors

Submission of papers

Sansai publishes original research papers not normally exceeding 10,000 words, inclusive of notes and references, on any branch of global environmental studies. The journal also welcomes the submission of project reports, research notes, shorter essays introducing research perspectives, letters to the editors and book reviews. All submissions should be written in a way that is accessible to a broad readership.

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6. References.
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Journals: Kelly, Michael J. (1997) 'Overcoming Obstacles to the Effective Implementation of International Environmental Agreements', *Georgetown International Environmental Law Review* 9, No.2: 447–488.

Proceedings: Woese, Carl R. (2002) 'On the evolution of cells' in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 99 (13): 8472–7.

Electronic sources: UN (1992) 'Chapter 26 [Agenda 21]: Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training'. Available at <www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter36.htm> [Accessed 8 February 2006]

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Cover design by Hirohide Kobayashi, associate professor of the Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto University. The title, *Sansai*, incorporates letters modelled on typefaces used in the first edition of Dr Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) – a landmark in the history of language development. The four Chinese characters that appear on the back cover are a photographic reproduction of the wooden gate-plate of Sansai Gakurin. They were written by the sinologist Dr Ichiro Kominami, Emeritus Professor of Kyoto University, in the style of late 2nd century stone inscriptions of the Confucian classics that stood in the forecourt of the Grand School of Luoyang, the capital of the late Han dynasty.

三才 第六冊

編者 横山俊夫、ガノン・トレイシー、
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